



District of Columbia  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

# 2019-20 STATE TITLE III ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Summary Report

Sept. 1, 2020

# Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of by the 2019-20 State Title III Advisory Committee (STAC) activities and plans for the 2020-21 school year's committee. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) convenes stakeholders annually in a State ESEA Title III Advisory Committee to support OSSE in carrying out its responsibilities under Title III of the ESEA for the District of Columbia.

The 2020 State Title III Advisory Committee was made up of 20 members with expertise in serving English learners (ELs), including both public and public charter school teachers, local education agency (LEA)-level staff, a nationally known representative from a policy analysis organization, and teacher educators from institutions of higher education. The committee addressed three priorities, which informed OSSE policy decisions and the creation of new resources for LEAs:

- EL exit criteria review
- Progress monitoring for current and monitored exited ELs
- Provisional EL identification

# Introduction

Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) provides funding to ensure that English learners attain English proficiency and achieve at high academic levels and can meet the same challenging state academic standards that all children meet. Title III requires that each state education agency consult with LEAs, teachers, administrators of Title III programs, parents of English learners, and other relevant stakeholders in developing its Title III state plan. To that end, the OSSE convenes an annual State ESEA Title III Advisory Committee which consists of stakeholders from a range of perspectives: school and LEA administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, educators from institutions of higher education, and members of community organizations. The committee also serves as an advisory body supporting OSSE in its responsibilities under Title III of the ESEA for the District of Columbia. The overarching goals are for the committee to:

- Provide expertise in identifying strengths and most salient needs and concerns of the children who are English learners, including immigrant students in the District.
- Analyze strengths and gaps in existing Title III-related policy, guidelines, and technical assistance.
- Contribute to OSSE's guidelines for educational programs, administration, and accountability to support LEAs in ensuring that immigrant children and English learners attain English proficiency and meet state academic achievement standards.

The committee met five times. Each meeting ran from 4-5:50 p.m.:

- Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019 (at OSSE)
- Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019 (at OSSE)
- Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2020 (at OSSE)
- Wednesday, April 22, 2020 (virtually)
- Wednesday, June 3, 2020 (virtually)

The 20 committee members represented teachers, LEA EL coordinators, teacher educators and policy experts from a range of organizations, as shown in the table below.

| <b>Committee Members</b> | <b>Affiliation</b>                                 |
|--------------------------|--|
| Elizabeth Barkley        | DC Public Schools, Cardozo Education Campus        |
| Rachel Chaney            | Meridian Public Charter School                     |
| Hannah Cousino           | DC Public Charter School Board                     |
| Sarah Fiore              | Capital City Public Charter School                 |
| Leandra Gonzalez         | Paul Public Charter School                         |
| Elani Lawrence           | Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School |
| Sarah Moore              | University of Maryland College Park                |
| Leidy Navarro            | DC Public Schools Central Office                   |
| Joy Newman               | District of Columbia Public Schools                |
| Jean-Basile Nguetta      | Friendship Public Charter School                   |
| Andrea Rayo              | Bridges Public Charter School                      |
| Kerry Richardson         | Washington Latin Public Charter School             |
| Betsy Romero             | Lee Montessori Public Charter School               |
| Megan Sands              | Relay Graduate School of Education                 |
| Elizabeth Sauler         | DC Public Schools Office of Teaching and Learning  |
| Jennifer Steele          | American University                                |
| Julie Sugarman           | Migration Policy Institute                         |
| Monique Wells            | DC Public Schools, Walker-Jones Education Campus   |
| CQ Wilder                | Appletree Early Learning Public Charter School     |
| Alice Zhang              | University of Maryland College Park                |

## Priorities Addressed by the Committee

The committee addressed three priorities, which informed OSSE policy decisions and the creation of new resources for LEAs:

- EL exit criteria review
- Progress monitoring for current and monitored exited ELs
- Provisional EL identification

Committee members provided resources and engaged in discussions with other committee members to develop recommendations and feedback for OSSE.

# EL Exit Criteria

## Purpose

States are required to have standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures for ELs. The exit criteria serves as an indicator that a student has attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without language assistance program support. In DC, a composite score of 5.0 on the ACCESS 2.0 test is required to exit from EL status. As a result of WIDA's ACCESS 2.0 standards alignment process in summer of 2016, WIDA increased the rigor of the assessment and now students must demonstrate higher language skills to achieve the same overall composite proficiency level scores (1.0-6.0). Since then, significantly fewer ELs meet the 5.0 composite ACCESS score exit criteria each year in DC and across states that use the ACCESS test. The 2018-19 school year committee reviewed DC's exit criteria and recommended to maintain it but re-review using another year of test data for the 2019-20 committee consider whether a change is warranted.

## Activities and Outcomes

The committee reviewed data analysis on EL students' performance on Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) by English proficiency level (1.0-5.0). Students who score about 4.5 or higher on ACCESS have an average PARCC English language arts score equal to the average PARCC score of non-ELs. The committee discussed options for a revised EL exit criteria, as well as pros and cons for each option, which were discussed and debated in small groups and then in a whole group discussion. The committee discussed grade-level expectations and how they related to the WIDA ACCESS performance level descriptors. Focus groups with educators were also held by OSSE and the findings were shared and discussed with the committee.

The committee also reviewed data on the performance of EL students who take Alternate ACCESS and the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) due to significant cognitive disabilities. Currently, there is no exit criteria for the EL students who take these assessments. The committee recommended deeper data review and discussion of this topic as well as dually identified students in the future.

Overall, most stakeholders supported a change to the exit criteria, though some were less inclined to make a change. OSSE recognizes the academic achievement of EL students within the 4.5 and higher range of ACCESS scores. The committee's rich discussion and feedback on this important decision provide extremely useful input to inform OSSE's decision. However, particularly given the school closures in spring 2020, OSSE decided to make no changes to the state EL exit criteria at this time.

# Progress monitoring for current and monitored exited ELs

## Purpose

LEAs are required to monitor the progress of all EL students in achieving English language proficiency and acquiring content knowledge. LEAs must also monitor students who exited EL status within the past four years, to ensure that additional supports are no longer needed and to provide those supports, if needed. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that EL students are making appropriate progress in acquiring English and content knowledge while in the LEA's EL program or, for opted-out EL students, in the regular educational setting.<sup>1</sup> LEAs should have monitoring systems in place that include benchmarks for expected growth and assistance for students demonstrating need for more support toward their goals. LEA stakeholders and STAC members have indicated the need for supports to enhance their monitoring practices for both current and recently exited EL students.

## Activities and Outcomes

The committee discussed current practices, strengths and weaknesses of monitoring practices from their experiences and identified that checklists, samples, and professional development workshops would be useful for LEAs. Using a workshop approach, the committee brainstormed checklist questions, potential data sources, and descriptions of the essential features of effective progress monitoring. Committee members also shared tools and examples with OSSE.

The committee's work informed the creation of professional development on using multiple sources of data to inform goals setting and progress monitoring. Additional resources are being developed based on the committee's drafts and will be disseminated to LEAs.

# Provisional EL Identification Procedure

## Purpose

ESEA<sup>1</sup> requires that students be identified for EL status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in a state; for students who enroll after the beginning of the school year, the LEA must send the required parent notice within two weeks of a student being placed in an EL program. In spring 2020, when many schools in the US closed temporarily due to coronavirus (COVID-19), the US Department of Education released guidance on EL identification during distance learning. The guidance recognized that state education agencies and LEAs may

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of Justice and US Department of Education 'Dear Colleague' Letter Jan. 7, 2015. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>

need to adjust their statewide, standardized entrance procedures temporarily to allow for the use of available online resources and other options to identify EL students as quickly as possible in order to start services for those students. OSSE began to explore provision identification procedures and sought stakeholder input from the committee.

## Activities and Outcomes

The committee reviewed a sample provisional EL identification procedure released by another state and provided detailed feedback on the example and recommended changes. Based on the committee's review, OSSE developed and released a [Provisional Pre-K-12 English Learner Identification Procedure During Distance Learning](#).

## Recommended Priority Areas for the Next Committee

At the conclusion of the 2019-20 State Title III Advisory Committee meeting cycle, a survey was provided to all members to elicit their feedback on the experience and their recommendations for the next cycle of convenings. Respondents listed EL placement, services, staffing and professional development as the most important EL program and policy elements (from the eight sections of OSSE's EL policies and procedures document) for the STAC to address in the year ahead. Specifically, responses were related to equipping all teachers with the knowledge and skills to teacher EL students effectively and guidance on what services should look like across all schools. Additionally, supporting students and families during distance learning came up as a high priority topic for the coming year. Incoming members will also provide input into the 2020-21 school year committee's priorities.